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Joint Inspection Unit

Report of the Joint Inspection Unit for 2012

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The present note was prepared pursuant to paragraph 17 of General Assembly resolution 65/270, in which the Assembly requested the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB), to expedite the implementation of that resolution, including through the expected provision of support to the Joint Inspection Unit by the secretariats of the participating organizations in the preparation of its reports, notes and confidential letters, and through the consideration of and action on the recommendations of the Unit in the light of pertinent resolutions of the Assembly, and to report to the Assembly on an annual basis on the results achieved.

2. In his capacity as Chair of CEB, the Secretary-General provides extensive support to the Joint Inspection Unit, beginning with the circulation of its reports. In accordance with the mandate of the Unit, the secretariat of CEB circulates all reports of system-wide concern to United Nations system organizations and compiles the comments received. During this process, as a matter of practice, the secretariat requests organizations to respond within the deadline provided, so that reports can be produced within the mandated time frame.

3. In response to General Assembly resolutions, the Joint Inspection Unit has increased the number of system-wide reports that it produces, as indicated in figure I of its annual report (A/67/34). Much of this increase is attributed to an increase in the coverage of coordinated and more effective policies, strategies and programmes of the organizations of the United Nations system. The Unit completed 17 reports and notes in 2012. While seven reports and four notes were of a system-wide nature, the CEB secretariat prepared comments for 13 reports, including for 1 report that was circulated to the organizations of the United Nations system for information only. Those reports, some of which were completed by the Unit in 2011, were prepared taking into account the timelines for responses provided for in the statute of the Unit. In each case, organizations were requested to comment on the final version of the report, including the methodology used and the content of the recommendations. These comments, which are issued as United Nations documents

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under cover of a note by the Secretary-General, reflect the overall consensus of the United Nations system, although each organization may choose to address the specific recommendations within the framework of its governing bodies.

4. As noted above, the CEB secretariat collected and collated responses from agencies for inclusion in reports of the Unit and prepared the accompanying notes by the Secretary-General. These consolidated notes were also circulated for confirmation from agencies before the final versions were produced for consideration by legislative and governing bodies. CEB continues to perform these actions within the existing capacity of its secretariat, which has not increased, the increased demand placed upon it through the growing number of system-wide reports notwithstanding. In its annual report, the Unit indicated that it expected to continue its system-wide focus in accordance with its strategic framework 2010-2019, which will therefore continue to stretch the capacity of the CEB secretariat to respond, including in terms of providing support to intergovernmental deliberations relevant to reports of the Unit and on relevant reports of other jointly financed bodies.

5. The CEB secretariat remains committed to satisfying mandated reporting requirements and supporting the Unit within the agreed six-month time frame called for in the statute of the Unit. Any adjustment to this process would require a review and consultation with the participating organizations, in addition to extra capacity within the CEB secretariat to effectively support the Unit in respect of system-wide reports. The CEB secretariat will continue to work with the Unit to improve and/or expedite the commenting period for system-wide reports.

6. In addition to carrying out this report preparation process, the CEB secretariat has continued to work closely with the Joint Inspection Unit on the preparation of its annual programme of work by circulating a request for report proposals and compiling and annotating the responses received before forwarding them to the Unit for consideration. In addition, in 2012, the CEB secretariat actively participated in the meeting of focal points, which is held every two years.

7. In response to General Assembly resolution 66/259, the Secretary-General, in his capacity as Chair of CEB, invited the executive heads of participating organizations to facilitate the work of the Unit by accelerating their comments on the reports and recommendations of the Unit so that reports are followed up in a timely manner. He also invited executive heads to identify the appropriate substantive agenda items of their legislative organs under which the thematic reports of the Unit should be listed; to fully comply with the statutory procedures for consideration of the reports of the Unit; and to fully assist the Unit with the timely provision of all information requested by it.

8. The CEB secretariat continues to maintain a constant dialogue with both the inspectors and the Executive Secretary of the Joint Inspection Unit so as to ensure a smooth report preparation process and to identify methods for enhancing the value of the Unit's reports. The secretariat remains dedicated to cooperating with other inter-organizational bodies, not only as mandated by relevant resolutions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, but also to further the collective efforts towards a stronger United Nations system working effectively together.

9. In 2012, the subsidiary machinery of CEB continued its practice of inviting inspectors to participate in its meetings, where relevant to the Unit's work. In particular, the High-level Committee on Programmes invited the Unit to join its twenty-fourth session for discussions on the inter-agency coordination mechanism on oceans and coastal issues (UN-Oceans), given that the Unit had recently concluded its evaluation report of the mechanism. The inspector responsible for the report participated in the dialogue. In addition, the Human Resources Network welcomed inspectors to its meeting in February 2012 to exchange views during the preparation of the Unit's reports on the management of sick leave in the United Nations system and staff recruitment and selection in United Nations system organizations.

10. The Secretary-General will continue to pursue a closer working relationship with the Joint Inspection Unit and to encourage all organizations to respond in a timely manner and in a spirit of cooperation to requests of the Unit.

11. As regards organizations' consideration of and action on the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit in the light of pertinent resolutions of the General Assembly, chapter I, section D, of the annual report of the Unit for 2012 (A/67/34) contains detailed information about the actions taken by organizations of CEB in follow-up to recommendations of the Unit.